

Denying ourselves and taking up our cross isn't a little side issue-it is absolutely necessary to becoming or continuing to become a disciple of Jesus.

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Prayer Study #306

THE BAPTISM AND SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN THE LAST DAYS

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Wherefore, take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Ephesians 6:13

“We are at war. How I’ve missed this for so long is a mystery to me. Maybe I’ve overlooked it; maybe I’ve chosen not to see. We are at war. I don’t like the fact any more than you do, but the sooner we come to terms with it, the better hope we have of making it through to the life we do want. This is not Eden. You have probably figured that out. This is not Mayberry; this is not Seinfeld’s world; this is not Survivor. The world in which we live is a combat zone, a violent clash of kingdoms, a bitter struggle unto the death. I’m sorry if I am the one to break the news to you; you were born into a combat zone, a violent clash of kingdoms, a bitter struggle unto the death. I’m sorry if I am the one to break the news to you; you were born into a world of war, and you will live all your days in the midst of a great battle, involving all the forces of heaven and hell and played out here on earth. Where did you think all this opposition was coming from?”

John Eldredge in *Waking the Dead*

No doubt the main purpose of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is to give the believer the power to be a witness. I think I would be remiss in teaching this series, however, if I did not emphasize to you that you become a real threat to the kingdom of darkness when you are walking in the baptism and the fullness of the Spirit. Beforehand, it is like you, as a believer, in Christ had the Sword of the Spirit, which in itself is a wonderful weapon. As a spirit-baptized believer, however, it is like you have atomic bombs. Therefore, I believe that another purpose of the Spirit-baptism is spiritual warfare. We look at the world and our society specifically and see the Church walking in 2nd Timothy 3:5: *Having a form of godliness, but denying the power of it.* This ought not to be. If the Body of Christ in America would stand up and fight as a unified body of believers, we could corporately make His enemies His footstool (Psalm 110:1, Matthew 22:44, Mark 12:26, Luke 20:43, Acts 2:35, Hebrews 1:13, Hebrews 10:13)

The Children of Israel in the Wilderness type the life of the Body of Christ and engaging in warfare was one of the things that the Lord called them to do:

1. First they were gathered together: *The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be* (Genesis 49:10). This is a prophetic verse of the coming of Messiah to rule and reign on the earth. But there is a message in this verse for us today. We are being called to come together so that we can mature (iron sharpens iron) and grow.
2. Afterwards the people grew as they followed the cloud by day and the fire by night in obedience to the Lord.
3. Next they were called to war against enemies. These enemies for us today are demonic enemies, although we must also fight against the Babylonian world system, false religions, and uncleanness in our world, among other things. When we mature and walk in the fullness of the Spirit, we stir up the enemy of our souls who wars against us, but we have the power to be more than conquerors and overcomers and to defeat the enemy.
4. Finally, there were great feast days in the camp. These represent the Great Harvest at the end of the age. When we stand and fight, we will produce fruit or a great harvest, especially at the end of the age, which we are fast approaching.

The Word is full of references to war and warfare. The day is coming when we cannot sit on the sidelines anymore. We must fight, even if it costs our lives. Some of the warfare verses are:

Exodus 15:3: *The LORD is a man of war; the LORD is His name.* Consequently, the Lord is in us (*Christ in you, the hope of glory-Colossians 1:27*) so the warrior is in us.

Exodus 14:14: *The Lord shall fight for you...* It is very comforting to know that the Lord will fight for us.

Psalm 24:8: *Who is the King of Glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD migh* Revelation 19:11: *And I saw heaven opened and behold, a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war.* Our God judges and makes war.

Revelation 17:14: *These shall make war with the Lamb and the Lamb shall overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and they that are with Him are called and chosen and faithful.* The ten kings make war with the Lamb. Since the Lamb is in us, they are making war against us.

Matthew 10:34b: *I came not to send peace, but a sword.* We who are His must enter the battle.

A CLOSER LOOK AT EPHESIANS 6:10-18 AMP

10 In conclusion, be strong in the Lord [be empowered through your union with Him]; draw your strength from Him [*that* strength which His boundless might provides].

THE JOY OF THE LORD IS YOUR STRENGTH. Nehemiah 8:10

11 Put on God's whole armor [the armor of a heavy-armed soldier which God supplies], that you might be able successfully to stand up against [all] the strategies and the deceits of the devil.

BE SOBER, BE VIGILANT, BECAUSE YOUR ADVERSARY, THE DEVIL, LIKE A ROARING LION, WALKETH ABOUT, SEEKING WHOM HE MAY DEVOUR. 1st Peter 5:8

12 For we are not wrestling with flesh and blood [contending only with physical opponents], but against the despotisms, against the powers, against [the master spirits who are] the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spirit forces of wickedness in the heavenly [supernatural] sphere.

A. DESPOTISMS OR PRINCIPALITIES ARE OVER GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS, TOWNS, CHURCHES, MINISTRIES.

B. POWERS ARE OVER WORLD SYSTEMS SUCH AS THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM, THE PRISON SYSTEM, ETC.

C. RULERS OF DARKNESS OF THIS WORLD ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR SLANTED NEWS, PORNOGRAPHY, VIOLENCE AND SENSUALITY OF TELEVISION AND MOVIES AND LITERATURE, DEMONIC INFLUENCE IN CERTAIN TYPES OF MUSIC, ETC.

D. WICKEDNESS IN THE HEAVENLY SPHERE PROMOTES CULTS, FALSE DOCTRINES, THE OCCULT.

13 Therefore put on God's complete armor, that you may be able to resist and stand your ground on the evil day [of danger], and, having done all [the crisis demands], to stand [firmly in your place].

ARE WE IN THE BEGINNINGS OR APPROACHING THE BEGINNINGS OF THE EVIL DAY?

14 Stand therefore-hold your ground-having tightened the belt of truth around your loins, and having put on the breastplate of integrity and of moral rectitude and right standing with God;

JESUS SAID UNTO HIM, "I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE..." John 14:6

THE LOINS ARE THE AREA BETWEEN THE HIPS, THE PLACE OF PROCREATION WHERE BIRTH TAKES PLACE AND THE WORD TELLS US IN GENESIS 1:28 TO BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY. THEREFORE, WE SHOULD BE BIRTHING TRUTH, THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL, WHEREVER WE GO.

15 And having shod your feet with the preparation [to face the enemy with the firm-footed stability, the promptness and the readiness produced by the good news] of the Gospel of peace.

PEACE I LEAVE WITH YOU, MY PEACE I GIVE UNTO YOU, NOT AS THE WORLD GIVETH, GIVE I UNTO YOU. LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED, NEITHER LET IT BE AFRAID.

John 14:27

16 Lift up over all the (covering) shield of saving faith, upon which you can quench all the flaming missiles of the wicked [one].

SO THEN FAITH COMES BY HEARING AND HEARING BY THE WORD OF GOD. Romans 10:17

17 And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit wields, which is the Word of God.

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD, AND THE WORD WAS GOD...AND THE WORD BECAME FLESH AND DWELT AMONG US...John 1:1 & 14

18 Pray at all times-on every occasion, in every season-in the Spirit, with all [manner of] prayer and entreaty. To that end keep alert and watch with strong purpose and perseverance, interceding in behalf of all the saints (God's consecrated people).

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING. 1st Thessalonians 5:17

ARE YOU A SOLDIER OF THE CROSS?

Characteristics of a Good Soldier

1. Spiritually fit, trained, and equipped: *But refuse profane and old wives' fables and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that not is and of that which is to come* (1st Timothy 4:7-8).
2. Not entangled by the things of this world. *No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier* (2nd Timothy 2:4).
3. Obedient to the commander. *For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ* (2nd Corinthians 10:4-5).

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

1. **Identify your enemy.** *Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, like a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour* (1st Peter 5:8).
2. **Listen to the Lord.** *And David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I pursue after this troop? Shall I overtake them?" And He answered him, "Pursue, for thou shalt surely overtake them and without fail recover all* (1st Samuel 30:8).
3. **Have a plan.** *Where there is no vision, the people perish...*(Proverbs 29:18).
4. **Be under spiritual authority and keep the leadership informed.** *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God* (Romans 13:1).
5. **Seek Him with prayer and fasting.** *And ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart* (Jeremiah 29:13).
6. **Don't throw your pearl before swine.** *Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet and turn again and lacerate you* (Matthew 7:6).
7. **Remember that there will be a counterattack against you when the enemy is being pushed back.** *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, "I will return unto my house from which I came out." And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself;*

and they entered in and dwelt there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first (Luke 11:24-26).

- 8. Don't allow discouragement or fear to stop you.** *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind (2nd Timothy 1:7).*
- 9. Go out in pairs.** *You need warriors around you to fight with you. And He called unto Him the twelve and began to send them forth by two and two and gave them authority over unclean spirits (Mark 6:7).*
- 10. Fight until you win.** *And David smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of the next day; and there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men, who rode upon camels and fled. And David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away; and David rescued his two wives. And there was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great, neither sons or daughters, neither spoil nor anything that they had taken in them; David recovered all (1st Samuel 30:17-19).*

Discerning Demonic Immorality
By a Brazilian Pastor

I had never struggled with pornography and lust in my life as a believer. It was simply not one of my fights. Then a year ago, I suddenly began to be totally obsessed with lust and pornography. It was almost overwhelming. It felt like something coming from outside of men. Some pastor friends and I began to pray. Soon a convert from the occult came to me and told me that for the past year, ten Macumba (a satanic cult in Brazil) groups in this area had made a list of targets to destroy with immorality. He told me, "Your name is on all ten lists."

Upon discovering the enemy's strategy, these people prayed directly against the darts of immorality. Instead of shrinking back with guilt and shame, I became assertive and turned my strength to resist satanic invasion. By God's grace, I succeeded.

Months later a fellow pastor visited this pastor's city for a conference. He reports that the man was baptized with fire in a spectacular way.